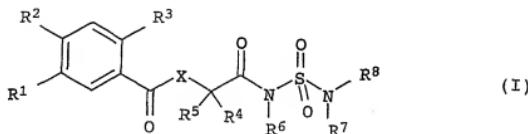


Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

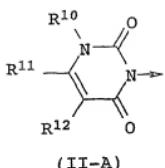
1. (Currently Amended) A 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid derivative compound of the formula I



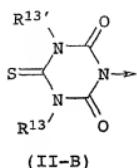
wherein:

X is oxygen or NR⁹,

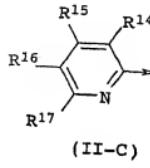
R¹ is a heterocyclic radical of the formulae II-A to II-H,



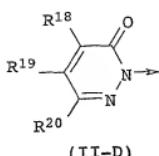
(II-A)



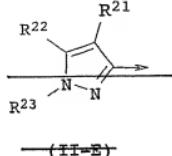
(II-B)



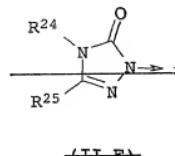
(II-C)



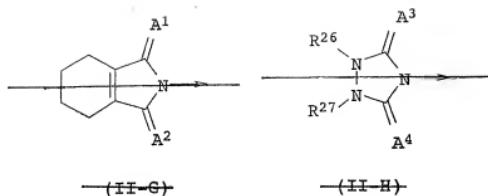
(II-D)



-(II-E)-



-(II-F)-



R^2 is hydrogen or halogen,

R^3 is halogen or cyano,

R^4 , R^5 independently of one another are hydrogen, C_1 - C_4 -alkyl or C_1 - C_4 -alkoxy, or R^4 and R^5 together are a group $=CH_2$,

R^6 is hydrogen, C_1 - C_4 -alkyl or C_1 - C_4 -alkoxy,

R^7 , R^8 independently of one another are hydrogen, C_1 - C_6 -alkyl,

C_3 - C_6 -alkenyl, C_3 - C_6 -alkynyl, C_1 - C_4 -haloalkyl,

C_1 - C_4 -alkoxy- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl, C_1 - C_4 -alkylthio- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

C_1 - C_4 -alkylsulfinyl- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

C_1 - C_4 -alkylsulfonyl- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

cyano- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl, C_1 - C_4 -alkoxycarbonyl- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

amino- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl, C_1 - C_4 -alkylamino- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

di(C_1 - C_4 -alkyl) amino- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

aminocarbonyl- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

(C_1 - C_4 -alkylamino)carbonyl- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

di(C_1 - C_4 -alkyl)aminocarbonyl- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl,

phenyl or C_1 - C_4 -alkylphenyl or

R⁷ and R⁸ together with the nitrogen atom to which they are

attached form a saturated or unsaturated 3-, 4-, 5-, 6 or 7-membered nitrogen heterocycle which may optionally contain one or two further heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen as ring members, which may contain 1 or 2 carbonyl and/or thiocarbonyl groups as ring members and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three substituents selected from the group consisting of C₁-C₄-alkyl and halogen,

R⁹ is hydrogen, hydroxyl, C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₁-C₄-alkoxy, phenyl, phenyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₃-C₆-alkenyl or C₃-C₆-alkynyl,

R¹⁰ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or amino,

R¹¹ is C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

R¹² is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R¹³, R¹³ independently of one another are hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R¹⁴ is halogen,

R¹⁵ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R¹⁶ is C₁-C₄-haloalkyl, C₁-C₄-alkylthio,

C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl or C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyloxy,

R¹⁷ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R¹⁸ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or amino,

R¹⁹ is C₁-C₄-haloalkyl, C₁-C₄-alkylthio or C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl,

R²⁰ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R²¹ is hydrogen, halogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

R²² is C₁-C₄-alkyl, C₁-C₄-haloalkyl, C₁-C₄-haloalkoxy, C₁-C₄-alkylthio or C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl,

R²³ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl,

or

R²² and R²³ together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or 7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which may contain a heteroatom selected from the group consisting of oxygen and nitrogen as a ring-forming atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three radicals selected from the group consisting of C₁-C₄-alkyl and halogen,

R²⁴ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

R²⁵ is C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

or

R²⁴ and R²⁵ together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or 7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which optionally contains an oxygen atom as ring-forming atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three radicals selected from the group consisting of C₁-C₄-alkyl and halogen,

R²⁶ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

R²⁷ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl,

or

R^{26} and R^{27} together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or 7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which optionally contains an oxygen atom as ring-forming atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three radicals selected from the group consisting of C1-C4-alkyl and halogen, A^1 , A^2 , A^3 , A^4 are each independently of one another oxygen or sulfur, or an agriculturally useful salt thereof.

2. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative-compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^2 is 10 fluorine, chlorine or hydrogen.

3. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative-compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^3 is chlorine or cyano.

4. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative-compound as claimed in claim 1 where X is oxygen.

5. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative-compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^6 is hydrogen.

6. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative-compound as claimed in claim 1 where R^1 is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-A in which R^{10} is C₁-C₄-alkyl or amino, R^{11} is C₁-C₄-haloalkyl and R^{12} is hydrogen.

7. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative compound as claimed in claim 1 where R¹ is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-B in which R¹³ and R^{13'} are each independently of one another C₁-C₄-alkyl.

8. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative compound as claimed in claim 1 where R¹ is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-C in which R¹⁴ is fluorine or chlorine, R¹⁵ is hydrogen and R¹⁶ is C₁-C₄-haloalkyl, C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl or C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyloxy.

9. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative compound as claimed in claim 1 where R1 is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-D in which R¹⁸ is hydrogen, methyl or amino, R¹⁹ is C₁-C₄-haloalkyl or C₁-C₄-alkylsulfonyl and R²⁰ is hydrogen.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative compound as claimed in claim 1 where R¹ is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-H in which R²⁶ and R²⁷ are each

independently of one another C₁-C₄-alkyl or C₁-C₄-haloalkyl or R²⁶ together with R²⁷ are a chain of the formulae -CH₂-O-(CH₂)₂- or -(CH₂)₄-.

14. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative compound as claimed in claim 1 where

- R² is hydrogen, chlorine or fluorine,
- R³ is chlorine or cyano,
- R⁶ is hydrogen and
- X is oxygen.

15. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid derivative compound as claimed in claim 1 where R⁴ or R⁵ is hydrogen and the other radical R⁴ or R⁵ is C₁-C₄-alkyl or R⁴, R⁵ are each methyl.

16. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising a herbicidally effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid derivative compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 and at least one inert liquid and/or solid carrier and, if desired, at least one surfactant.

17. (Currently Amended) A composition for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, comprising an effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid derivative compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as

claimed in claim 1 which acts as a desiccant/defoliant and at least one inert liquid and/or solid carrier and, if desired, at least one surfactant.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling unwanted vegetation, which comprises allowing a herbicidally effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid derivative-compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 to act on plants, their habitat and/or on seed.

19. (Currently Amended) A method for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, which comprises allowing an amount which is effective as a desiccant/defoliant of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid derivative-compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 to act on plants.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling unwanted vegetation or for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, comprising applying to plants, the habitat of the plants or seeds of the plants an agriculturally effective amount of a derivative-compound or salt of claim 1.